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Patrick Moran - President

Testimony
HB 439 – Workers’ Compensation – Occupational Disease Presumptions – 9–1–1
Specialists
Economic Matters
February 15, 2022
Support

AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 439. This legislation would provide that a 9-1-1 specialist who is diagnosed by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist with post-traumatic stress disorder is presumed to have an occupational disease that was suffered in the line of duty or course of employment and is compensable under the workers' compensation law.

9-1-1 specialists are truly the “first responders” and have been on the frontlines handling the dramatic increases in drug overdose emergencies, potential suicidal thoughts, health and safety emergencies – no one calls just to say “hi” – these are all potentially life and death situations.

Yet despite this constant drumbeat of high urgency and stress, 9-1-1 specialists are not presumed to suffer from an occupational disease if they encounter PTSD, depression or other mental illnesses.

It is time these specialists are treated appropriately. We thank you, and urge a favorable report of HB 439.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
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